Forrestal Worker Questioned Again In Kidnap Plot

By Betty Medsger
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A man the government apparently considers crucial to its case in the alleged Henry Kissinger kidnap plot said yesterday that FBI agents have questioned him again and told him they thought he was withholding important information.

Joseph Joynt, 35, fo 9804 McMillan Ave., Silver Spring, said he was questioned by two agents Monday afternoon at the Forrestal Building, where he has been employed four years as an elevator mechanic.

The FBI declined to comment.

"They don't seem to believe me," Joynt said yesterday at his Silver Spring home. He said the agents told him that Guy Goodwin, the U.S. special attorney who had been handling the case during the grand jury investigation in Harrisburg, Pa., was not satisfied with his testimony Jan. 27.

The agents, who questioned him, Joynt said, told him that four or five persons had made remarks that implicated me for having something to so with those people entering the tunnel.

"I told them 'You've got four or five liars you'd better check out,' " said Joynt yesterday.

In the conspiracy indictment against six persons already handed down by the grand jury, the first of 21 overt acts listed is that "on or about April 1, 1970, Philip Berrigan and Joseph Wenderoth entered underground tunnels in Washington, D.C." The 20th overt act listed is that "on or about Sept. 20, 1970, Joseph Wenderoth discussed the Washington, D.C., tunnel system with General Services Administration engineer."

Fathers Berrigan and Wenderoth are among the six who have been charged in the alleged conspiracy. Another seven persons have been named, but not charged, as coconspirators. J. Edgar Hoover announced six weeks before the indictment came down that Father Berrigan has masterminded the alleged plot from his cell in Lewisburg (Pa.) Federal Penitentiary. Father Berrigan is now at Danbury (Conn.) Federal Prison serving time for destruction of draft records in Catonsville, Md., in 1968.

In a 90-minute interview yesterday, Joynt strongly denied that he had taken the men into the tunnels, had arranged to have them taken in, had heard of a plan for peace movement activitists to enter the tunnels, or knew whether any of them ever entered the tunnels.

Agents who talked with him this week, said Joynt, told him they would return (presumably to the Forrestal Building) until they got the information they needed.

Joynt also said they urged him to encourage his sister, Patricia Chanel, also of Silver Spring, to testify before the grand jury.

Mrs. Chanel was cited Thursday for civil contempt of court. She earlier had refused to testify despite receiving immunity.

Both Joynt and his sister have been questioned twice by FBI agents in recent months. Mrs. Chanel was questioned at her home once in December. Both were questioned at the time their grand jury subpoenas were served in mid-January.

"They told me that morning," recalls Mrs. Chanel, "that my brother was going to hang by his thumbs."

Joynt, a father of six children ranging in age from 5 to 16, said he will not cooperate with the FBI if they question him again.

"I've always been 100 per cent honest and open with them," he said. "But those days are past. They will have to re-supoena me if they want to talk to me . . ."

Joynt said agents told him he made himself "look guilty" by taking the fifth amendment the first time the grand jury questioned him. "I told them I had to do that in order to get immunity, that that's what the Constitution is all about."

Unlike his sister, who has been active in the peace movement as a supporter and demonstrator, Joynt has never been actively involved in movement activities.

In fact, he describes himself as being more of a hard hat type. "I'm a hard hat right down the line when it comes to the FBI. I think it's an important institution," said Joynt. "But I think they are misusing their power this time."

Though he expresses strong opposition to the continued use of the grand jury to search for information about persons already indicted, Joynt was unwilling to protest by refusing to testify even though granted immunity.

"My philosophy is not as deep on this as Pat's," he explained, "and I had nothing to hide."